I'll Always Be There For You

by Julian Amsel

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> <meta name="Author"> I'll Always Be There For You "I'll Always be
There For You"

Cancer. The hidden curse.
> You can't see it, hear it, feel it. It comes upon people like a
silent wave of death, shattering the lives of all it touches.
People have always thought of me as smart. Intelligent. The brainiac.
When my friends didn't know what to do, they'd come to me. Smart
little Koushiro. Yeah, that's who I am.
> But I'm not. I'm downright ignorant, just so... so stupid... I
thought that it couldn't happen to me. That I was immortal. I
couldn't be touched.
 Isn't that the way it always seems to go?
People think it'll always be someone they read about in the paper, or
the uncle of a friend of a friend of a friend. They never think it'll
happen to them. They feel like it'll never touch them. They're too
hot to handle. They've got an angel watching over them. It's always
someone else, you see. Always someone else...
> And now... that someone else is me. <p>

We were in the hospital. I had been there repeatedly for the past few
weeks, because of a cold I had developed which my mother thought had
to be much more than an ordinary virus. "Somethings seriously wrong
with you, Koushiro," she had told me. I suppose she was right. After
all, as far as I knew, doctors don't usually take blood tests if you
have nothing more than a fever.
> This trip, however, was different. My parents had received a call
from the doctor. They seemed nervous, almost frightened. As we walked
through the halls, I shivered, with more than just lack of heat.
Something was wrong. I could feel it. Something was very wrong.
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We entered his office. After being here so many times, it wasn't hard to remember the way. The room was the same as the rest of the building. Blinding white, seeming to scream to my eyes. It didn't seem like a place where people healed. It seemed like a place of death.
> "Ah, hello."
 Somehow, I couldn't help but glare at the doctor. He seemed cheerful. Too cheerful. Maybe I was just in a bad mood, or maybe the fever was changing my attitude, but I wished I could just wipe that smile off his face.
> I heard my father clear his throat, and from the corner of my eye I could see his face, how pale he looked. "Sorry to be rude, but I don't think we should waste time with this. It's very late, and-"
 "I'm sorry," the doctor replied, standing up. "I realize it's late, but this simply couldn't be delayed." He sighed, and shook his head. "I've run the tests, and I'm afraid I found something that I think will startle you." He glanced at me, his smile fading. "Koushiro, I think you should leave the room for a moment. I need to talk to your parents in private."
> "Yes, sir," I said coldly, not bothering to look at him. Stiffly I walked out and shut the door behind me, sighing with fatigue. Why couldn't I stay? The thought flashed through my mind briefly before I pushed it away. It didn't matter. It didn't matter at all. I'd find out one way.. or another.
 Usually, I was the kind of person who would avoid doing anything that was considered "wrong". So when I pressed my ear to the door, hoping I would hear the discussion clearly enough, I couldn't help but feel slightly guilty. Still, I had the right to know what was going on.

It was only a moment before I stepped back from the door. My heart was pounding in my chest, eyes wide with disbelief as the doctor's words echoed in my ears.
> "Mr. and Mrs. Izumi... I'm afraid your son may have developed leukemia."
 I leaned against the wall, mind clouded by shock and an uncontrollable fear. There was only one thing running through my mind. Leukemia. Cancer. People die from cancer. Cancer...

I tried to gather my thoughts together, trying to ignore the fear which screamed in the back of my mind. Think straight, I told myself. Just stay calm. Think of.. cheese. Cats. Computers. Something, anything! But somehow, it didn't work. I wasn't just afraid. I was terrified.
> I paced up and down the corridor, trying to shake off the feeling of dread. Glancing up at the hall mirror, I stared at someone who should have looked like me, but didn't. My usually bright black eyes were now clouded, glassy. My hair was limp, and my eyelids were heavy with lack of sleep. I had always been slightly pale, but now my face was like that of a ghost, white as an eggshell. I was a mere shadow of my former self, though I hadn't realized it until now.
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"Koushiro? Are you all right?"
> My mother's voice interrupted my thoughts. I turned around slowly and looked up at her, shaking. "No," I whispered. "I'm not all right." I swallowed hard and slumped against the wall, closing my eyes to try to stop myself from crying. "I heard what the doctor said, mom."
 I heard her gasp slightly. She's probably surprised that I was eavesdropping, I thought. But who really cares.. nothing matters now.
> I felt her arms around me, holding me close as if to comfort me. Somehow, I couldn't help myself... I rested my head on her shoulder,

glad that she was there, that she was my mother, even though I had never known my real one. Though I tried to avoid it, the tears forced themselves out from under my eyelids and I couldn't help but let out a strangled sob.
 "Mom... I'm scared..." I had never admitted my fears to anyone before, not even her. I usually tried to keep them bottled up inside, tried to keep them hidden. But this was different...
> "Koushiro.. Don't worry, it'll be all right.." She kissed my cheek and held me tighter, whispering soft words of confidence, though I could tell by the sound of her voice that she was as afraid as I was.
 A thought passed through my mind and before I could stop myself I blurted it out, voice choked with tears. "Am I going to die?"
> She was hesitant to reply. I held my breath, wishing I had just kept my mouth shut.
 "We don't know," she said softly. "In fact, we can't be absolutely sure if you have it. But if you do.. it's in the early stages.. they'll probably be able to cure you. Maybe."
> "Maybe?" I whispered, voice shaking. It wasn't a very encouraging thought..
 "Oh, Koushiro..." I could feel her hold on me lessen and I looked up at her, blinking in surprise when I saw that there were tears in her eyes.
> "Mom? Are you okay?"
 "I'm sorry," she whispered, wiping her eyes on her sleeve. "I.. just... I'm so worried.... I don't want to lose you, Koushiro."
> I've never seen her like this before, I thought. Somehow, it scared me even more than the thought of death. "It's all right, mom," I said softly as I reached up to hug her, knowing that this time I would have to comfort her, and not the other way around. "You won't lose me. As sure as I'm here right now, I'll always be there for you. Always."
 Though she gave no reply, I knew she heard me, and I knew that she knew I meant it. No matter what would happen to me, I'd always be there for her. Always.

Author's notes: *le sigh* What's with all these cheezy Koushiro stories that I've been writing lately? My brain must be rotting from lack of schoolwork. *blinky* I can't believe I said that..
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